



THE NEW JERSEY ITALIAN AND ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION



Italian Liberation Day Commemoration

On April 24, 2004, the Commission and six other Italian American organizations from New Jersey partnered with the Office of the Governor to host the 2nd annual Italian Liberation Commemoration at the Governors Mansion. Over 1,000 people registered for the dignified event, where Italians and Italian Americans commemorated the liberation of Italy during World War II and celebrated the bonds of friendship between Italy, America and the State of New Jersey.

The main speakers at the event were three New Jersey Governors -

Governors Florio, McGreevey, and DiFrancesco -- while Consul General Antonio Bandini of New York represented the Italian Government. The Vatican Envoy to the United Nations, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, provided moving invocations during the dignified flag-raising ceremony. Mr. Joseph Piscopo, the Coro Lirico opera chorus and tenor Mr. Nino Rossano entertained the crowd during lighter moments.

The Commission would like to thank Governor McGreevey for hosting the event and issue a

special thanks to the various organizations which helped to fund, organize and develop this important event. Organizers will be publicly recognized at the October Statewide Congress.



Joe Piscopo at the Governors Mansion

Culture & Commercial Council Appointed

At the behest of Governor McGreevey, the Commission has formed the Italian Cultural and Commercial Exchange Council (ICCE) to study ways to increase cultural and commercial exchanges between New Jersey and Italy. The Commission voted to task this Council with researching various proposals from the community that would achieve the goals set out by both Governor McGreevey and

Consul General Bandini at a meeting in February at the State House. The survey and planning is expected to take one year to coordinate ideas from various agencies, institutions and firms.

Commissioners Alessi, Checcio D'Argenio, Paragano, Rorro, and White have agreed to serve on this Council and will report their findings in 2005. In addition, the Commission also congratulates the new community appointees:

ICCE Council Appointees

Dr. Robert Freda
Frank Gargione
Michael Genevrino
Daniella Puglieli
Robert Bianchi
Marco Cangioli
Phyllis Cedola
Anna Cerene
Anthony Ciappina
Robert Costello
Jack DiPiazza
Rosemary Feteryk
Sam Fumosa
Augusto Sorriso

3rd Italian Leadership Convocation Held



Commissioner Checcio at Convocation

On March 4, 2004 the Community Advisory Council and the Community Outreach Relations Committee of the Commission convened the 3rd Italian American Leadership Convocation at the Forsgate Club in Cranberry, New Jersey. Building on the momentum of the prior two convocations, this event attracted 87 community leaders from North and Central Jersey to

help advise the Commission on various programs, projects and activities for the coming years.

Following presentations from the Commission, the participants joined working group planning sessions and participated in surveys regarding important focus areas for the Italian American community. Results of this convocation will be published in a report during the summer and will help guide the Commission.



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Chairman's Message

While the focus of the Commission's work is educational in nature, the Commission's mission of promoting a positive image of Italians and Italian Americans is taking many forms. This past quarter, several important events have taken place that help

meet that objective. The March Italian American Leadership Convocation served to bring Italian American Community leaders together to assess which future educational programs could be developed. On April 24th, the moving commemoration of Italian Liberation Day served to educate the public about an important holiday in Italy and helped us remember the sacrifices of World War II, born by US citizens and



Commission Chairman Larry Paragano Italian citizens together. The Commission's support of student and teacher conferences in March and April directly promoted our educational mission.

And now, at the request of the NJ and the Italian Governments, the Commission will be assessing ways to promote cultural and commercial exchanges. Both of these efforts serve to promote Italy and the Italian culture and will benefit all of NJ's citizens.

Commission Upcoming Events

- **June 4 and June 5, 2004** - *Teach the Teachers*
Professional conference for Italian teachers at Montclair State University
- **September 2004**
Launch of Pilot Curriculum Project in Selected Schools - Field test of Phase I Pilot of Italian Curriculum begins
- **October 23, 2004** - *NJ Congress of Italian American Organizations*
1st statewide convention at Rutgers University
- **October 25-31, 2004**
Age of Galileo Symposium - Public events at Rutgers U
- **December 4, 2004** - *History of Italian American Discrimination Conference*
Public event at Seton Hall

Students Celebrate Italian Heritage

On March 26, at the Grand Centurion in Clark, the Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey, a chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Italian hosted a day of presentations and competitions for public school students of Italian in New Jersey. This event, known as "Italian Heritage Day" had remarkable successes in the past and made it a point of reference for all educators of Italian language throughout the state. This year's theme was "*La Gastronomia nel Cinema e nella Musica*". The program included student-written and produced performances in the target language, a student project contest, (covering the elementary to advanced levels), including poster

projects, musical performances, and video projects. Teachers judged the projects and awarded student trophies for the winners. The day concluded with a deejayed social gathering with lunch, and featured Italian music.

Four of the essay contest winners were awarded a 6-week summer course in Siena, at the *Universita' per gli Stranieri*. These students will be able to study Italian language and culture in Italy, an experience that will help foster their interest in the Italian culture for years to come.

This event and the scholarships were made possible thanks to a generous grant from the New Jersey Italian American Heritage Foundation. The Commission's

Commissioner Vignale at Italian Heritage Day



Higher Education Committee strongly endorsed this program and Commissioners Trubiano and Vignale were both active in promoting and organizing the successful event.

The Commission would like to thank all of the students and teachers who participated in this year's event and congratulate the Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey for making this wonderful program possible.



Preparing Curriculum Pilot

The Curriculum Project, named the "Universality of Italian Heritage" has moved from the writing phase of the project, to the preparation for the launch of the first test Pilot. Written by teachers, for teachers, the curriculum model has been refined over the past year, yielding enough materials for the development of more than 50 lesson plans. The Curriculum Development Committee, of which Dr. Gilda Rorro is the Chair, has approved the editing of 16 plans for use in grade levels 6-12. The purpose of the Curriculum is to expose students throughout New Jersey, of all ethnic backgrounds to



Curriculum Chair Dr. Gilda Rorro

the contributions of the Italian Heritage for all subject matters. The expected test lesson plans are designed for use in history, social studies, science, language arts, world languages, art and other fields and align with the core content standards for each subject. The final lessons are expected to include the following topics:

- Galileo's contributions
- Palladian architecture
- Meucci and Marconi
- Pico and concept of progress
- Italians in WWII detention
- Stereotyping in the classroom
- Da Vinci and his writings
- Roman and natural law
- Amphitheater design
- Italian explorers
- Jefferson and Mazzei
- Darwinism and prejudice
- Italian immigration
- Lynching Italian Americans
- Renaissance art perspectives
- NJ's Italian Americans

These plans will be launched as a Pilot in the Fall to approximately 10 school districts for evaluation and assessment by teachers.

Thanks to Dr. Robert Freda

The Commission would like to thank Dr. Robert Freda for serving as the Commission's Executive Director from 2002 to June of this year. Dr. Freda was present at the creation and his contributions to the programs and the structure have been substantial. The Commission expresses its deepest gratitude for his dedication and commitment. Upon stepping down in June, he will continue as an Advisor to the Commission.

Welcome to New Editor

The Commission would like to welcome Dr. Kevin Brady as the new editor of the Curriculum Project. Dr. Brady brings years of experience as a teacher, a university professor and a professional curriculum writer. Dr. Brady is reviewing and editing the final battery of lesson plans for the Pilot Program. He will serve as the chief coordinator for the development of the Curriculum Manual for teachers.

CAVOUR'S COLUMN

This April the Italian American community witnessed a successful test of unity and organization in the preparation of the Italian Liberation Day Commemoration at the Governor's Mansion. Using the Commission structure as a platform, six organizations joined together to enable this important ceremony to take place. While the Office of the



By A. Roger
Marinzoli

Executive Director
of the New Jersey
Italian and Italian
American Heritage
Commission

This Column is named after Cavour, founder of "Il Risorgimento", the 1847 Italian Newspaper, which promoted Italian unity, heritage and identity.

Governor was kind enough to provide the location, security and send the invitations to the community, a number of Italian American community leaders had to raise the funding, orchestrate the logistics and develop the program for the event. Working together, the Elizabeth Chapter of UNICO, the Bianchi Lodge of OSIA, the Coccia Institute, the Ribera Club, the Sicilian Federation and the NJ Italian American Foundation were able to effect one of the best flag-raising ceremonies in recent history at Drumthwacket.

In its mission to promote coordination of efforts among the State's Italian American organizations, the Commission achieved success with the execution of Italian Liberation Day. We hope that this is the first of many joint efforts.



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NECTFL Conference

On Friday, April 16th, the Higher Education Committee organized a panel focusing on promising new trajectories in the instruction of Italian language and culture in the state of New Jersey at the Northeastern Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in New York. The panel title was entitled *"From the Community to the Classroom, Promoting the Study of World Languages: The Case of Italian in New Jersey."* While the language discussed was Italian, the initiatives described could be applied generally.



Higher Education Chair Dr. Trubiano

Programs were featured at a variety of instructional levels (from elementary to post-secondary) that are successfully generating, sustaining, and increasing public demand for, and student interest in, the study of a language other than English.

The audience learned about an innovative new Italian language summer program for children; a school district's fruitful direct collaboration with the Italian government for creating teaching positions; and new technologies for teaching Italian in the classroom. Panelists included: Josephine Ianoale, Mt. Laurel; Giuseppe Mazarella, Ridgefield; Enza Putrino, Allendale. The moderators of the panel were: Higher Ed Committee members Dr. Rosa Zagari-Marinzoli, The College of New Jersey and Dr. Marisa Trubiano, Montclair State University.

The New Jersey Institute of Italian and Italian American Heritage Studies, located at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, is the operational body of the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission for program implementation and administration. The Commission, located in, but not of, the New Jersey Department of Education, was created pursuant to the enactment of P.L. 2001, Chapter 343 C.18A4-42 and signed into law on in January 2002. The Institute, a 501.c.3. entity with statewide jurisdiction, is charged with providing services to the public at large, as well as public, non-profit and other public service institutions in all twenty-one counties in New Jersey

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